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ABSTRACT

A discussion of the development of bilingualism in preschool-age children, intended for parents, focuses on the reasons for encouraging bilingualism and the role of family members and home environment in doing so. An introductory section offers background information on the book and a brief examination of the situation for emigrants coping with a new culture. This section notes the role of parents as models and factors in the development of bilingual/bicultural identity among parents and children alike. The second part examines the effects of bilingualism on the child's intellectual, cognitive, language, and social development and looks at research on children raised bilingually within the family. The third part examines how children learn language, the processes of learning two languages simultaneously vs. successively, language strategies for the family, and family goals concerning degree of bilingualism desired. The fourth section offers practical suggestions for raising children bilingually, both inside and outside the home environment. The final section contains five case studies and personal narratives about bilingual families. Appended materials include a family bilingualism rating scale, checklist of important points covered in the book, lists of references and suggestions for further reading, and an index to the book's contents. (MSE)

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